

Message Text

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R 231803Z JUN 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

UNCLAS STATE 146303

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDIP, SN

SUBJECT: PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES

REFERENCE: BOWERS/SOLITARIO LETTERS OF MARCH 25 AND JUNE 2

1. INFORMATION REQUESTED REFERENCED COMMUNICATIONS SET FORTH BELOW.
2. DIPLOMATS OF SINGAPORE EMBASSY (FIVE INCLUDING THE AMBASSADOR) ENJOY FREE IMPORTATION PRIVILEGES THROUGHOUT THEIR PERIOD OF OFFICIAL ASSIGNMENT. ONLY LIMITATION APPLIED IS WITH RESPECT TO IMPORTATION OF NEW AUTOMOBILES, EACH DIPLOMAT (AMBASSADOR EXCEPTED) BEING ENTITLED TO IMPORT TWO NEW VEHICLES DUTY-FREE FOR PERSONAL OR FAMILY USE IN A THREE-YEAR PERIOD.
3. IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROVISIONS OF VIENNA CONVENTION ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND BASED ON RECIPROCAL PRACTICE, NONDIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL OF EMBASSY MAY IMPORT HOUSEHOLD AND PERSONAL EFFECTS DUTY-FREE FOR SIX MONTHS AFTER THEIR

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INITIAL ARRIVAL. PRESENT PRIVILEGES COULD BE EXTENDED TO COVER AN AUTOMOBILE IF SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT IS WILLING TO RECIPROCATE. THIS CONCESSION MAY BE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE, HOWEVER, SINCE ANY ALIEN ARRIVING IN U.S. MAY ENTER PERSONAL AUTO DUTY FREE UNDER PROVISIONS OF U.S. CUSTOMS REGULATIONS AND TARIFF SCHEDULES ADMINISTERED BY CUSTOMS.

4. DIPLOMATS ARE EXEMPT FROM FEDERAL TELEPHONE AND GASOLINE TAXES; D.C. AND NEW YORK GASOLINE TAXES; D.C., MARYLAND, VIRGINIA AND NEW YORK SALES TAXES, AND RECEIVE FREE DIPLOMATIC AUTOMOBILE REGISTRATION AND VEHICLE OPERATORS' PERMITS IN D.C. AND VIRGINIA. DIPLOMATS RESIDING IN MARYLAND PRESENTLY REGISTER VEHICLES IN D.C. MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY OF A DIPLOMAT WHO ARE NOT U.S. NATIONALS ARE EXEMPT FROM D.C. AND VIRGINIA SALES TAXES AND ARE ISSUED GRATIS AUTOMOBILE REGISTRATION AND PERMITS. IN VIEW OF PRESENT PRACTICE OF MARYLAND AND NEW YORK TO EXTEND SALES TAX EXEMPTION ONLY TO THE DIPLOMAT AND SPOUSE OF SENDING STATES NOT PARTY TO THE VCDR, CHILDREN OF SINGAPORE DIPLOMATS ARE NOT EXEMPT FROM SALES TAX IN THOSE JURISDICTIONS.

5. NONDIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL WHO ARE NATIONALS OF SINGAPORE NOT PERMANENTLY RESIDENT IN THE U.S. ARE EXEMPT FROM THE FEDERAL TELEPHONE AND GASOLINE TAXES BUT NOT FROM TEN CENT PER GALLON D.C. GASOLINE TAX. MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL STAFF AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS, IF THEY ARE NOT U.S. CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS, ARE EXEMPT FROM SALES TAX AND RECEIVE GRATIS AUTO REGISTRATION AND OPERATORS' PERMITS IN D.C. AND VIRGINIA. THEY ARE ACCORDED FREE MARYLAND AUTOMOBILE REGISTRATION BUT ARE NOT EXEMPT FROM THAT STATE'S SALES TAX.

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6. FOR THE MOST PART, PRIVILEGES AND EXEMPTIONS, PARTICULARLY THOSE AVAILABLE TO NONDIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL, ARE BASED ON PROVISIONS OF THE VCDR AND RECIPROCITY SHOULD BE CITED IN EFFORTS TO OBTAIN COMPARABLE PRIVILEGES FOR OUR PERSONNEL. THE FEDERAL GASOLINE TAX (FOUR CENTS A GALLON) IS IMPOSED ON THE MANUFACTURER AND INCORPORATED IN PRICE PAID BY PURCHASER AND EXEMPTION NOT REQUIRED BY VCDR PROVISIONS. EXEMPTION HERE AUTHORIZED BY GRATUITOUS IRS RULING AND NOT CONDITIONED BY RECIPROCITY.

7. NONDIPLOMATIC STAFF OF SINGAPORE EMBASSY COMPOSED OF FOUR ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL AND TWO SERVICE (MESSENGER AND CHAUFFEUR) STAFF MEMBERS. CHRISTOPHER

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